



Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission

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IDAHO SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

District Consolidation Hearing

Tuesday, August 10, 2010

Broulim's Supermarket Conference Room

150 N. State St., Rigby ID 83442

7:00 p.m. MDT

APPROVED MINUTES

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Flory

Dwight Horsch

Dick Bronson

Roger Stutzman

Dave Radford

COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:

Sara Schmidt

Kristin Magruder

Terry Hoebelheinrich

PARTNERS AND GUESTS PRESENT:

Harriet Hensley

Karma Bragg

Jeff Burwell

Lynn Tominaga

Terry Halbert

Mel Briggs

Becky Crystal

Randy Purser

Jason Ferguson

Pat Hendren

Shane Shippen

Richard Jacobsen

Chuck Stewart

Dennis Tanikuni

Pete McGarry

1 Meeting was called to order by Bill Flory, Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWC)
2 member, at 7:08 p.m.

3
4 Welcome and self-introductions followed.

5
6 Mr. Flory reviewed Idaho Code 22-2720 and the requirements set as forth. Mel Briggs,
7 Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District Chair, verified to the commission that 25
8 landowners from each district signed the petition.

9
10 At this hearing, the commission shall determine whether 1) the proposal would service the
11 public health, safety and welfare or 2) the proposal is administratively practicable and feasible.

12
13 Flory opened the floor for comment on the petition.

14
15 Mr. Briggs spoke on behalf of the Jefferson district. There are no issues surrounding the public
16 health, safety, or welfare. Mr. Briggs further explained that it just makes sense to bring the two
17 districts together instead of splitting the county in half.

18
19 Pat Hendren, Mud Lake Soil and Water Conservation District, corroborated Mr. Briggs's position
20 and further described the efforts of the two districts to work together. Chuck Stewart
21 discussed the history of the two districts and feels it would be a better use of federal, state, and
22 county resources.

23
24 The districts are currently sharing an administrative assistant and feel that they can eliminate
25 the challenges she is currently having juggling the two districts.

26
27 There has been no negative feedback about the proposed consolidation between the
28 landowners and land users in the two districts.

29
30 Mr. Briggs feels confident that they can address all issues within both districts adequately.

31
32 Dick Bronson, SWC member, asked whether the districts had considered the implications of the
33 base and match funding for the three-year window following consolidation. Mr. Briggs
34 responded affirmatively and also informed the commission that they have already discussed
35 the matter with their counties and they will not be losing any money from their local units of
36 government.

37
38 Randy Purser, Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts (IASCD) Division VI director, asked
39 what the name of the district would be and the general consensus is that the new district would
40 be name the Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District to keep is consistent with the
41 county in which it resides.

42
43 The first issue was discussed about whether the consolidation would be administratively
44 practicable and feasible. Mr. Briggs responded first. The boards have discussed the issue with

45 their shared administrative assistant, Becky Crystal, and have identified some possible issues to
46 consider. Mr. Briggs advised the commission that they recognize that there may be some
47 personnel issues that will need to be addressed when they arise. There was further discussion
48 on specific projects like the poster contest and other outreach initiatives and Mr. Briggs feels
49 that Ms. Crystal can continue to do good work while continuing her college course schedule.
50 Ms. Crystal has continued to successfully accumulate responsibilities and the district will deal
51 with each issue the amount of her time available specifically as it comes up.

52
53 Discussion was opened about keeping and maintaining a diverse board to have the new district
54 area well-represented.

55
56 Mr. Bronson suggested that the districts work together to reach a property agreement prior to
57 consolidation in order to avoid any legal issues as the Mud Lake district has a building to sell
58 and the board members are exploring all options for sale.

59
60 Mr. Flory commented that the Jefferson and Mud Lake districts are forging some new ground
61 with this consolidation and suggested reaching out to the other districts with the specifics on
62 the process and issues to be aware of. Mr. Briggs responded that both boards believe that they
63 have addressed all of the issues in order to move ahead successfully.

64
65 Dwight Horsch, SWC member, stated that he was confident in both of the districts preparation
66 and does not have any concerns about the money or property issue. He asked the districts if
67 they had adequately discussed this issue with the county commissioners. Mr. Briggs responded
68 affirmatively. Mr. Horsch further inquired about the antidegradation plans of each district. Mr.
69 Briggs advised the commissioners of the status of each plan in that the priorities are nearly the
70 same for each district and the consolidation of the two plans should be seamless. Mr. Horsch
71 commented on the importance of working together to maintain funding for projects. Mr.
72 Hendren and Mr. Briggs described how they worked together on an EQIP contract and how the
73 two districts made the project work successfully for the entire county. Discussion followed.

74
75 Dave Radford, SWC member, asked if the districts had discussed the possibility of having seven
76 board members instead of five. Mr. Briggs said that they have discussed it and are going to
77 maintain the status quo for now and revisit the idea at a later date. Discussion followed about
78 a property agreement between the two districts. Harriet Hensley, Deputy Attorney General,
79 advised that it is not required by statute but it is definitely a good idea.

80
81 **Mr. Horsch moved to accept the petition to consolidate the Jefferson and Mud Lake Soil and**
82 **Water Conservation Districts. Mr. Radford seconded.** Discussion followed to include the
83 findings of the hearing and to add the name of the district.

84
85 **Mr. Horsch moved to amend his motion to find that the proposal to consolidate the Jefferson**
86 **Soil and Water Conservation District and Mud Lake Soil and Water Conservation District**
87 **would serve the public health, safety, and welfare and that the proposal is administratively**
88 **practicable and feasible, and to further accept the petition of the Jefferson and Mud Lake Soil**

89 **and Water Conservation Districts to consolidate as the Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation**
90 **District. Mr. Radford seconded the motion as amended. No discussion. Motion passed**
91 **unanimously.**

92
93 There was further discussion between the parties about the proper procedure for the Mud Lake
94 district to sell their property as a governmental entity.

95
96 There was a reminder that the commission is conducting a public meeting the following day on
97 August 11, 2010 at 8:00 a.m. and invited all interested parties to attend.

98
99 **Mr. Flory adjourned the meeting at 7:59 p.m.**

100
101 Respectfully submitted,

102
103 Dick Bronson
104 Commissioner and Secretary,
105 Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission